

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An improved golf ball packaging assembly to increase the shelf life of soft cover golf balls, said assembly comprising:
 - a container and at least one soft cover golf ball;
 - 5 said container comprising a structural member that defines a cavity sized and configured to retain said golf ball;
 - said container further comprising an opening extending into said cavity and a removably attached sealing member that covers said opening;
 - said container also comprising a vapor barrier that substantially encases
 - 10 said golf ball;
 - said vapor barrier transmitting a first rate of vapor into said cavity and said golf ball absorbing vapor from within said cavity at a second rate, said first rate being lower than said second rate.
2. The assembly of Claim 1, wherein said first rate is less than about 2.4
- 15 grams per 100 square inches per day at 100 degrees Fahrenheit and 90 % relative humidity.
3. The assembly of Claim 2, wherein the first rate is less than about 1.8 grams per 100 square inches per day at 100 degrees Fahrenheit and 90 % relative humidity.
- 20 4. The assembly of Claim 1, wherein the vapor barrier comprises a material selected from the group consisting of polyolefine, polyamide, ethylene vinyl alcohol polyester, polyacrylonitrile, (poly)vinylidene chloride, and fluoro carbon polymer.
5. The assembly of Claim 1, wherein the vapor barrier comprises a metal material.
- 25 6. The assembly of Claim 1, wherein said container is resealable.
7. The assembly of Claim 6, wherein said removably attached sealing member is a cap that can be reattached to said structural member such that said container is resealable.
8. The assembly of Claim 7, wherein said cap includes an inner flange that
- 30 seals against an inner surface of said structural member.

9. The assembly of Claim 1, wherein said opening has a smaller diameter than said cavity.

10. The assembly of Claim 9, wherein said diameter of said opening is slightly smaller than said golf ball such that said golf ball must be shaken from said container.

11. The assembly of Claim 1, wherein said structural member is subdivided into a plurality of subcontainers.

12. The assembly of Claim 1, wherein said golf ball is packed within said container under vacuum.

13. The assembly of Claim 1, wherein said container is sealed under pressure after being packed with said golf ball.

14. The assembly of Claim 13, wherein said container further comprises a high oxygen barrier layer.

15. The assembly of Claim 13, wherein said container is pressurized to a pressure of between about 5 and about 15 psi.

16. The assembly of Claim 15, wherein said container is pressurized to a pressure of between about 10 and about 12 psi.

17. A golf ball and package assembly that reduces the effect of ambient humidity upon a golf ball contained within the package during prolonged storage, the assembly comprising a housing defining an interior cavity sized to receive at least one golf ball, said housing forming, in part, a moisture barrier, a lip being positioned on said housing, said lip surrounding an aperture that communicates with the interior cavity, a flexible lid being removably mounted on the lip and comprising, in part, said moisture barrier and said golf ball being disposed within the interior cavity.

18. The assembly of Claim 17, wherein the lid is configured to be peelingly dismantled from the lip.

19. The assembly of Claim 17, wherein the housing comprises a moisture barrier.

20. The assembly of Claim 17, wherein the housing is circular.

21. The assembly of Claim 17, wherein the housing is polygonal.

22. The assembly of Claim 17, additionally comprising an adhesive between the lid and the lip.
23. The assembly of Claim 17, wherein the lid comprises a metal foil.
24. The assembly of Claim 17, wherein the housing comprises plastic.
- 5 25. The assembly of Claim 17, additionally comprising a pull tab on the lid.
26. A golf ball and package assembly that reduces the effect of ambient humidity upon a golf ball positioned within the package during prolonged storage, the assembly comprising a housing defining an interior cavity, the housing having a lip that surrounds an aperture that communicates with the interior cavity, a flexible cap being
- 10 removably engaged to the lip on the housing, the flexible cap being configured to be peeled from engagement with the lip, the housing and the flexible cap forming a vapor barrier when the cap is engaged to the lip on the housing, and a golf ball being positioned within the interior housing.
27. The assembly of Claim 26, wherein the interior cavity is filled with a dry
- 15 gas.
28. The assembly of Claim 26, wherein the interior cavity is filled with an inert gas.
29. The assembly of Claim 26, wherein the housing comprises plastic.
30. The assembly of Claim 29, wherein the cap comprises a metal foil.
- 20 31. A golf ball and a container assembly that reduces the effect of ambient humidity upon a golf ball positioned within the container during prolonged storage, said assembly comprising a container and a golf ball positioned within said container, said container comprising a housing having an outer surface and defining a cavity, said cavity being sized and configured to receive said golf ball, a vapor barrier being formed
- 25 separate from said golf ball and encasing said golf ball to limit moisture absorption by said golf ball, said container also comprising an opening that extends into said cavity through said housing, said opening being sized and configured to allow said golf ball to pass through said opening, a closure being removably attached to said housing and being positioned over said opening such that said closure closes said opening into said
- 30 cavity.

32. The assembly of Claim 31, wherein said closure may be peeled from said housing to reveal said opening.
33. The assembly of Claim 31, wherein said closure is adhered to said housing.
- 5 34. The assembly of Claim 31, wherein said closure is a laminate comprising a vapor barrier.
35. The assembly of Claim 34, wherein said vapor barrier comprises a metal foil.
36. The assembly of Claim 31, wherein said closure includes a pull tab.
- 10 37. The assembly of Claim 31, wherein said cavity receives a pressurized gas.
38. The assembly of Claim 37, wherein said pressurized gas is an inert gas.
39. The assembly of Claim 37, wherein said pressurized gas pressurizes said container to a pressure between about 10 and about 12 pounds per square inch.
- 15 40. An improved golf ball and package assembly comprising at least one golf ball, a package separable from said golf ball, said package defining at least one cavity within which said golf ball is positioned, said package also includes a sealable cover that encloses the cavity such that said package encases said golf ball, said package reducing vapor transmission into said cavity such that said golf ball loses less than
- 20 about 1 mile per hour of initial velocity after twelve months of storage at about 72 degrees Fahrenheit.
41. An improved golf ball and package assembly comprising at least one golf ball, a package separable from said golf ball, said package defining at least one cavity within which said golf ball is positioned, said package also includes a sealable
- 25 cover that encloses the cavity such that said package encases said golf ball, said package reducing vapor transmission into said cavity such that said golf ball loses less than about 1 mile per hour of initial velocity after twelve months of storage at about 110 degrees Fahrenheit.
- 30 42. An improved golf ball and package assembly comprising at least one golf ball, a package separable from said golf ball, said package defining at least one cavity within which said golf ball is positioned, said package also includes a sealable

cover that encloses the cavity such that said package encases said golf ball, said package reducing vapor transmission into said cavity such that said golf ball loses less than about 1 mile per hour of initial velocity after twenty-four months of storage at about 72 degrees Fahrenheit.